



ESCAPE BLOCKING

Why should we do it?

It is critical that your child take your directions seriously. If your child does not follow your directions, he/she is getting TWO payoffs:

1. Avoids the demand (escape/negative reinforcement)
2. Engages in an activity that is more fun than following your direction (positive reinforcement)

If your child does not follow your direction, you must block him/her from accessing anything that is more fun.

METHOD:

1. Give direction. You may (you don't have to) use the 'first...then' format: "first put the bowl on the table, then you may have chips"
2. If your child does not follow the direction, reduce the effort by putting the stimulus closer to the child. Do NOT do 'hand over hand' at this point.
3. If your child is refusing (e.g. plopped to the ground), implement ESCAPE BLOCKING. Do not allow escape!
4. The direction stays. Block your child from accessing objects, music, TV, computer, anything he/she may want to engage with.
5. Monitor your child with NO TALKING, NO EYE CONTACT. Be calm and neutral. The only communication should be a gesture to the relevant stimulus, or repeat the 'first...then' direction.
6. When your child follows the direction (does not have to be perfect), give the positive outcome immediately.
7. If you run out of time, you may have to do hand over hand. If so, omit reward.

